



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Chris Conlan (858) 694-2137

Jack Miller (619) 338-2070

HANTAVIRUS CONFIRMED IN THREE WILD MICE

County Vector Control confirmed today three wild mice in the Tierrasanta area have tested positive for Hantavirus. The mice were trapped during routine Vector Control monitoring.

Hantavirus is carried by wild rodents, primarily deer mice. The virus, found in rodent droppings and urine, can be inhaled by humans when it becomes airborne. The airborne virus can cause Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS), which is a rare illness that can be fatal.

The first signs of human illness caused by Hantavirus are similar to flu symptoms. They include fatigue, fever, muscle aches, headache, dizziness, chills, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. Later symptoms of HPS include coughing, shortness of breath rapidly progressing to severe difficulty in breathing, and sometimes death.

While there is no specific treatment for Hantavirus, there are ways to avoid exposure to the virus. "It is important to eliminate rodent infestations immediately and avoid rodent infested areas," said Gary Erbeck, director of the Department of Environmental Health. "Do not stir up dust or materials that may be contaminated with rodent droppings and urine. Now is a good time to use caution while opening up cabins that have been closed for the winter."

Clean up rodent droppings and urine using the wet cleaning method described below. **Do not sweep or vacuum.**

WET CLEANING METHODS:

- Ventilate affected area by opening doors and windows for at least 30 minutes.
- Use rubber gloves. Spray a 10% bleach solution (2 tablespoons bleach to 1 cup of water) onto dead rodents, rodent droppings, nests, contaminated traps and surrounding areas and let the disinfectant stand for at least 15 minutes before cleaning. Clean with a sponge or a mop.
- Place disinfected waste into two plastic bags, seal them and discard in the trash.
- Wash gloves in a bleach solution, then soap and water, and dispose of them using the same double-bag method. Thoroughly wash your bare hands with soap and water.

For more information, visit www.sdvector.com.

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